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THE MAYDEW CHARM

—BY—

MERAB EBERLE.

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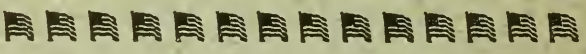

BY SEYMOUR S. TIBBALS

HERE is a ten minute dramatic reading with a climax that will cause a thrill. Suitable for a male or female reader and a number that will strengthen any program.

We recommend it for any patriotic celebration, commencement, alumni or civic banquet.

The story deals with the manner in which the news of America's entrance into the war was received in a dugout in Belgium. A colonel of artillery, a priest and an Irish-American are the leading characters. You will like it.

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THE ELDRIDGE ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE

FRANKLIN, OHIO - - - - DENVER, COLO.

THE MAY DEW CHARM

By MERAB EBERLE

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CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

SPRING—*Clothed in delicate green draperies and wearing a rainbow colored scarf which can be used with excellent effect in the entering dance. She carries a wand tipped with a tinsel star.*

ZEPHYR—*A tiny youth (a small girl may take this part) dressed in the costume of a jester. Carries striped wand in hand.*

CLARA, MARY, BETTY, SARAH—*Dressed in the style of the day in dainty lawn or organdy. In the last scene they wear white draperies and wear wreaths of smilax in their hair. One bears the satin cushion on which the May Queen's crown of apple blossoms rests.*

MAY QUEEN—*A tall girl of natural charm. She wears a white draped dress edged with pink apple blossoms.*

QUEEN BUTTERCUP—*Dressed in yellow with a yellow wreath on head. Carries yellow wand. Attendant fairies are dressed in a similar fashion with exception of wreath and wand. The dresses are much prettier if made to the knees.*

QUEEN ROSE—*Short skirted frock of pink. Crepe paper makes lovely petals. She wears a wreath of pink roses on her head and carries a pink wand. The attendant fairies are dressed in a similar fashion with exception of wand and wreath.*

QUEEN VIOLET—*Dressed in short skirted violet costume and wears wreath of violets. She carries a violet wand. Her attendant fairies carry no wands and wear no wreaths.*

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The May Dew Charm.

SCENE I.

(A lovely woodland scene at dawn. Four girls are bathing their faces in May dew.)

Mary—A jolly superstition this.

Betty—No superstition. Why I as faithfully believe that this Maydew will efface my freckles as I do that some shall go to heaven.

Clara—I for one sincerely hope so. *(Sighs)* The last time that he came he looked at me so closely that I know he saw this spot above my left eyebrow.

Betty—How, I should like to know? You wear your hair completely daubed over that one eye.

Sarah—He and forever he. To every freckle's disappearing they sing its dirge with reiterated comments on the "him." Such vanity!

Mary—Why waste your time then? If we are foolish, are you not doubly so? We have a purpose.

Sarah—So have I.

Betty—Oh, tell us.

Clara—*(Doubtingly)* Who can he be?

Sarah—Again, oh life alive, he and forever he. I speak of no man. Why I wash my face in this Maydew that I may for just a moment think, that fairies and my dreams are true.

Betty—What nonsense.

Mary—Not half so foolish as you think. What is this life worth without its dreams? We build our Spanish castles, one and all. Though some so poorly wrought are as beggar huts

Clara—I wish that we could crown ourselves a queen of May.

Betty—The very thing.

Sarah—Who would she be?

Mary—For our own sakes let us choose some one that is not present here. Let us have a real queen. One who has a regal bearing.

Clara—Well, we like that.

Mary—(Laughing.) I meant no slander, but let us hurry back and on our way will plan who'll be our queen. We can, at least, be courtiers.

Betty—Let's have it here. This stump would make a splendid ground work for the throne and this dead sapling the very Maypole. It is all ready but a few colored streamers.

Clara—But we have no maypole dancers trained.

Mary—We'll have a pole at any rate. What would a May queen do without a pole. She would deem hers an empty realm indeed.

(They exit amid a clatter of laughter and talk. Bird calls are then very much in evidence. Spring enters and dances in a delightful fashion.)

Spring—At the lightsome, merry beat
Of my dainty windshod feet,
All the gates let down their bars,
All the meadows blossom stars.

In a wondrous, purple mass,
Violets dot the new grown grass,
Fountains bubble, bluebirds sing,
I am lovely, I am Spring.

(Pauses in her dance.) Oh, what a place is this. Just the spot in which I and my fairies at the sun's high stand shall celebrate. Here we can dance and sing. *(Calls.)* Rose, Violet and Buttercup, come quickly here.

(Queen Rose and Buttercup enter, courtesying to the queen.)

Queen Rose—Your bidding, merry, merry Spring?

Spring—Wait but a moment. I called also Violet.

Queen Buttercup—As I came hurrying along the airy road, Violet I saw covering up dead Winter's eyes with purple blossoms, and so much engrossed was she, that she heard not my greeting as I passed.

(Queen Violet enters.)

Queen Violet—Zephyr just told me that he heard you call.

Spring—Now my flower fairies, all I have to say is, at the noontide I would wish you here with your subjects all, to celebrate the advent of the May.

Queen Rose—A lovely thought. Come, let us hasten on our way. My fairies are at many points today.

CURTAIN

SCENE II.

(The same woodland. It is near the noontide. The girls are again seen. This time they are fixing the throne. Streamers are already attached to the Maypole.)

Mary—This is such a lovely, lovely spot that I fancy fairies often pass this way.

Clara—The dew's all gone.

Betty—Silly, of course, it's almost noon.

Mary—I'm very glad that we chose Catherine for our queen. She is so lovable that I do not mind the thought of paying her homage.

Sarah—Look, here are rose petals. Some one else must have passed this way.

Clara—And here's a violet.

Mary—And a buttercup.

Betty—Why, girls, the grass is covered with them and they were not here a few short hours ago.

Sarah—Fairies and witchcraft. This spot breathes magic.

Mary—What a place to crown a queen.

Betty—Come for the hour approaches and we must put on our courtier robes.

(Exeunt.)

(Spring enters and stands well to front center of the stage. The rose, violet and buttercup fairies follow their respective queens. The rose fairies take positions at the right, the violet fairies at the left, and the buttercup fairies at the rear. After the lines have become stationary the queen flowers stand at attention three feet to the center front of the respecive rows.)

Spring—This troubles me. Mortal has been here since we left. Mark you the throne and see the sapling with those long streamers.

Queen Violet—Mortals would call that a Maypole and they dance about it, circling round and round. *(Advances to Maypole and lifts streamers.)* See, every one a ribbon takes, and weaving in and out they dance, making a pretty sight, as pretty sights of mortals go.

(Enter Zephyr.)

Zephyr—Hello, what's up? And here is Spring. I have not seen you since we came down the weather road together.

Spring—And Zephyr, jolly, ever-laughing Zephyr, what have you been doing?

Zephyr—I've been busy. Never have I seen so many mischievous spring frosts fluttering around. Last night I met a very vicious little fellow, but I melted him. I just blew upon him thus and so.

Queen Violet—Oh, be careful. You will break my little flowerlets from their stems.

Zephyr—Zephyr never hurt a violet. Why he loves them almost as he does the Violet Queen. *(Ripple of laughter and wise nods among the violet fairies.)*

Queen Rose—Just yesterday you told me that fond Zephyr's heart never so gay was as when near me.

Queen Buttercup—And yester eve, just as the sun was sinking in the West, he said that earth needed no sun when I was here. *(All laugh.)*

Spring—A fickle lover. *(Zephyr starts to leave.)* Where are you going?

Zephyr—*(Waving hands.)* Such an assemblage is beautiful, but it grows confusing. *(Sighs.)* I wish I did not care so much for beauty. I must go.

Spring—But wait a moment. I had planned a celebration of May's advent now but three hours ago. But mortal since was here. There is the throne they raised and here their Maypole tall, round which they dance strange dances.

Zephyr—So, just so. Straight here I blew from a laughing crowd of maidens. I had but paused to touch

the tall one's curls. *(Ripple of laughter from fairies. Zephyr pauses embarrassed.)*

Spring—Speak on.

Zephyr—Then don't let them interrupt me. *(Spring lifts up her hand indicating a desire for silence.)* I heard these pretty maidens say that they had planned a Mayday celebration, and mourn the hollow mockery of it, because no one among their number knew how to dance the Maypole dance.

Spring—But you said they were laughing.

Zephyr—Trying to make the best of a sorry situation.

Spring—And do you think they mean to have their celebration here?

Zephyr—Their Maypole's here. Their throne.

Queen Violet—Depart we then. Whenever mortal comes then we must go.

Queen Rose—Ah, but their gardens are lovely homes to stay in.

Zephyr—I would not go.

Spring—What shall we do?

Zephyr—Hide for the moment. Let their queen mount on their throne. Then will I bring a sleep to them. You can then have your revels. They will but think they dream.

Queen Buttercup—And let us learn the Maypole dance. If fairy feet can not unravel the mysteries of it no mortal's could.

Spring—But are you sure that you can make them sleep?

Zephyr—As sure as that robins sing in April days.

Spring—Where did you find this precious secret?

Zephyr—When I was but a few years younger and went into the witch of Endor's cave. I saw her take a little berry, crush it and say: "Breathe it my beauties," to three young maidens who sat there and all tumbled off into an instantaneous sleep. Then the witch called up spirits out of the brimstone depths and creatures from the topmost stratas of the air and those maidens saw nothing. Though I heard one tell the others what she dreamed and the dream was as the reality.

Spring—And the berries, where are they?

Zephyr—I have gathered a few in my wanderings recently. *(Takes a few from his pocket and shows them to Spring who nods. Music is heard in the distance. All listen)* Here they come now with their coronation crowd. We'll hide.

CURTAIN

SCENE III.

(Girls in white draperies stand on either side of throne on which May queen sits. One lifts the crown from the bearer's cushion and places it on the queen's head. Just as it is put in place, Zephyr appears, though he is supposedly invisible to the coronation party, and scatters a powder. Instantly langour manifests itself.)

May Queen—Why I feel that I must sleep. *(Head nods and she sleeps.)*

Clara—The whole world reels.

Mary—Slumber as dark as midnight takes hold upon me.

Betty—This is most remarkable.

(One by one the party succombs.)

(Enter Spring.)

Spring—Poor sleeping May Queen and her coronation party fair, bright may your dreams be and very beautiful.

Zephyr—I can make them very strange. Instead of you dancing I can make them see purple and yellow moons whirling in mad gyrations, or as many spinning gigantic snowflakes parti-colored.

Spring—No, let them see us as we are, fancying us us only as a dream when they awaken.

(From the center back appear the buttercup fairies. From the respective sides come the violet and rose fairies headed by their queens. They throw clouds of colored papers into the air.)

Spring—Lovely golden flowerlets, little suns that shine in the green meadows and break the gloom of winter's thraldom, my rose fairies with your lithesome bodies, join in the merriment and Queen Violet lead out along the rhythmic dances your own fair subjects. *(In ecstacy.)* Had ever queen a realm as fair as this?

(At this point a drill is introduced.)

1. 12 girls should participate in this drill. They dance to front, hands clasped high, separate, six dance to left and six to right, around to the back, circling around the corners, rather than turning square corners.
2. First two to meet at center back join hands and dance to front. Others following in couples.
3. First couple turn to right, second couple to the left. Circle to back. Meet as before and come down in fours.
4. At front all left face and follow girl at extreme left. Dance in large circle about stage.
5. When circle is complete join hands and reverse, circling once about stage.
6. Drop hands and follow girl who was leader in figure 4, winding a spiral.
7. Unwind spiral.
8. When line is again straight across front of stage dance backward in line formation to rear.
9. Repeat figure 1.
10. Repeat figure 2 and break up when at rear of stage.

If a more elaborate drill is desired any fancy drill may be given.*

Spring—And now the Maypole. There it stands unchallenged by the grace of fairy feet. Come forth as many of you as are hours which flit between the height of noon and the dark mid of night. *(12 fairies advance, 4 from each division.)* Take up the gay hued ribbons and let your feet run fleet as brooklets, as light as

*We can recommend "The Butterflies Revel," to be found in the Help-U Drill Book for Intermediate Grades. Price 30 cents.

Zephyr's gentlest winds. Come Zephyr, give them of your store of grace. Wave light your wand.

Zephyr—I'll wish them music to which, if their feet were heavy as old Colossus,' still would they dance. *(Exquisite music is immediately heard and the fairies take up their Maypole round. The remainder may sway in rythm with the music. When the dance is finished the May Queen shows signs of waking.)*

Zephyr—(Pointing toward the Mayday party of girls.) They awaken. Let us disband.

Spring—Yes, our fairy revels have their end. Old Time is stronger than our magic power. *(All fairies exit.)*

May Queen—(Awaking.) A lovely, lovely sight. *(Looking about her.)* Why, you are sleeping, all of you. Such a beauteous revel as you've missed! *(Shakes Clara.)*

Clara—(Awaking.) Oh, happy happy day, oh lovely sight. *(Spies Mary asleep and rouses her.)*

Mary—So wonderful. Why I had never dreamed that aught could be so fair. *(All waken.)*

May Queen—You were all sleeping when a fairy band displayed their revels before my very throne. Zephyr was here, and Spring, and such a crew of radiant fairies as never mortal eye had seen before.

Clara—I was not sleeping.

Mary—Not I.

Betty—Nor I.

Sarah—I saw them.

May Queen—But you were wrapped in slumber most profound.

Sarah—Well then I dreamed it.

All—And I.

Betty—'Twas true as dreams are true.

Mary—As real as May Queen's realms.

Mary—As true as the tale that tells of the May dew's charms, which gives it the power to wipe away Nature's unkind blemishes.

May Queen—Well, then you dreamed and I among you. It is enough to have seen, whether in dream or out. Now let us hie away. But remember always to come here unto this spot when it is May.

CURTAIN

SUGGESTIONS

This play is written especially for college, boarding school and high school pupils. It forms an excellent background for gymnastic work, which can be used most effectively in the last scene. The drill or dance should not be of more than ten minutes in length, however.

The scene is preferably out-of-doors although it may be worked out on a smaller scale upon a stage. If given at night colored lights can be used with a bewilderingly beautiful effect in the fairy scenes, especially during the Maypole dance.

The Maypole should be made to look as much like a sapling as possible and should be in the scene from the start, but with the streamers hidden. The throne in the last scene should be draped in white and placed upon a dais.

Spring, Zephyr and the fairies should be as graceful as though they really came from fairyland. Music of a soft and appealing nature will enhance the beauty of the play greatly.

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